

Message Text

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SUBJ: AMERICAN STUDIES RESEARCH CENTER

1. APPROXIMATELY A YEAR AGO THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION ASKED THE BOARD OF THE AMERICAN STUDIES RESEARCH CENTER, HYDERABAD, TO CONSIDER MERGING WITH OSMANIA UNIVERSITY ON WHOSE CAMPUS IT IS LOCATED. THE CENTER IS A REGISTERED INDIAN SOCIETY AND, UNDER INDIAN LAWS GOVERNING SUCH SOCIETIES, HAS POWER TO TAKE SUCH AN ACTION. THE EMBASSY'S ONLY LEGAL ROLE IN THE ORGANIZATION IS TO DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT TO RECOMMEND CU CENTER FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND IN WHAT AMOUNT.

2. AT ITS MEETING LAST NOVEMBER THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION REPRESENTATIVE COULD NOT BE PRESENT AND THE BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT REJECTED THE MERGER REQUEST.

3. THE MINISTRY RENEWED ITS REQUEST, AND AT ITS MEETING AUG 3, 1974 AND DIRECTORS OF ASRC PASSED THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION: "THE BOARD CONSTITUTES A SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO EXAMINE A PROPOSAL BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION TO BRING THE ASRC INTO THE INDIAN UNIVERSITY SYSTEM." THIS WAS A COMPROMISE RESOLUTION ACCEPTABLE TO THOSE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD WHO DO NOT WANT ANY CHANGE.

4. NO BOARD MEMBER SEEMED INTERESTED IN TOTAL MERGER. RATHER, THEY SEEM TO PREFER AFFILIATION, RETAINING SOME AUTONOMY. THEY WOULD PREFER TO AFFILIATE WITH A CENTRAL (THAT IS DELHI-CONTROLLED) ORGANIZATION IN HYDERABAD. THE ONLY EXISTING ONE IS THE CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF ENGLISH AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES WHICH IS THE EQUIVALENT

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OF A UNIVERSITY. HOWEVER, THE SUBJECT AREA RESTRICTIONS OF THIS

INSTITUTE MAY MAKE IT INAPPROPRIATE. THE OTHER ALTERNATIVE IS THAT WITHIN THE CURRENT SESSION OF PARLIAMENT THE EDUCATION MINISTRY EXPECTS A NEW CENTRAL UNIVERSITY (TO BE CALLED HYDERABAD UNIVERSITY) TO BE AUTHORIZED FOR THAT CITY. THE CONSENSUS SEEMED TO BE THAT THIS WOULD BE THE APPROPRIATE PLACE FOR ASRC'S AFFILIATION.

5. THE ENTIRE MEETING WAS MARKED BY CONTENTIOUSNESS. BEFORE THE AFFILIATION ISSUE WAS RAISED TWO MEMBERS OF THE BOARD HAD BEEN CENSURED, ONE FOR HAVING BEEN DRUNK AND DISORDERLY IN THE LIBRARY, ANOTHER FOR STUFFING THE BALLOT BOX TO INSURE HIS ELECTION. ALSO THESE MEMBERS HAD MADE VICIOUS AND UNSUBSTANTIATED ACCUSATIONS OF MISMANAGEMENT AND DISHONESTY AGAINST THE STAFF. DURING THE DISCUSSION OF THE AFFILIATION ISSUE THERE WAS ALSO A GREAT DEAL OF HEAT. FOR EXAMPLE, AT ONE POINT DR. M.G. KRISHNAMURTHI (PH.D., WISCONSIN, PREVIOUSLY ON THE STAFF OF THE CENTER, NOW CHAIRMAN OF ENGLISH AT JODHPUR UNIVERSITY) ASSERTED THAT ALL AMERICAN DIRECTORS OF ASRC HAVE BEEN THIRD-RATE AND THAT IS THE SOLE CAUSE OF THE LOW STATE OF AMERICAN STUDIES IN INDIA.

6. A SIGN THAT GOI OFFICIALS ARE CONCERNED BY THE TRAITORIOUS INSULTS METED OUT AT THE MEETING IS THAT R.S. CHITKARA, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, HAS ASKED FOR AN INFORMAL MEETING NEXT WEEK OF A FEW BOARD MEMBERS, INCLUDING CAO HAZLETT, TO DISCUSS WAYS OF DEFUSING THE SITUATION. WE WILL PARTICIPATE, OF COURSE, AND REPORT.

7. COMMENT: DR. SCHENDLER AS WELL AS SOME CU OFFICERS HAVE LONG THOUGHT WE SHOULD REDUCE OR ELIMINATE US SUPPORT FOR ASRC IF ITS STATUS IS CHANGED. PERHAPS WE SHOULD. UNDERSTANDABLY, IN PART BECAUSE OF THE PERSONAL ATTACKS ON HIM BY KRISHNAMURTHI AND ANOTHER BOARD MEMBER, DR. SCHENDLER'S MOOD AS HE LEFT INDIA WAS THAT WE SHOULD SEVERELY REDUCE OUR ALLOCATION AT ONCE. THIS SEEMS TO US TO BE PREMATURE. WE HAVE NO IDEA AT PRESENT WHEN THE CHANGE WILL OCCUR OR WHAT FORM IT WILL TAKE. THE EMBASSY POSITION IS THAT THE CU ALLOCATION TO ASRC BE KEPT AT \$92,000 FOR FY 75. WE WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT US-FUNDING OF AN ASRC BUILDING. OVER THE NEXT MONTHS WE WILL PREPARE PLANS FOR DEALING WITH ASRC IN THE FUTURE DEPENDING ON HOW ITS STATUS CHANGES, IF AT ALL.

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